

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

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E.O. 11652: NA
TAGS: EFIN, ID
SUBJECT: DOMSAT

REF: STATE 038415

1. SUMMARY: INDONESIA MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS STILL
PONDERING FURTHER ACTIONS IN DOMSAT CASE INCLUDING APPROACH
TO U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE. END SUMMARY.

2. IN LONG CONVERSATION WITH MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS EMIL
SALIM MARCH 3, I REVIEWED DEPARTMENT'S POSITION PREVIOUSLY
GIVEN TO AMBASSADOR RUSMIN (REFTEL) AND REPEATED READINESS OF
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE TO MEET WITH GOI LAWYERS. I GAVE SALIM
COPY OF LOCKHEED AGREEMENT WITH JAPAN AND EXPLAINED NEED FOR
AGREEMENT BEFORE RESULTS OF INVESTIGATION COULD BE SHARED.

3. SALIM SAID HE FELT GOI WOULD WISH TO APPROACH U.S.
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE BUT HAD SEVERAL QUESTIONS. HE FIRST
NEEDED TO DETERMINE MORE CLEARLY WHETHER INDONESIA
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE OR ATTORNEY GENERAL WOULD REPRESENT
INDONESIA. I SUGGESTED DETERMINATION SHOULD BE MADE ON
BASIS WHICH INDONESIA AGENCY WOULD CONDUCT INVESTIGATION
IF SUCH WARRANTED.

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4. HE WANTED TO KNOW TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR U.S. DEPARTMENT
OF JUSTICE. I SAID I HAD NO INFORMATION BEYOND REQUEST TO
JUSTICE FROM EXIM. PRESUMABLY JUSTICE WOULD SHARE ITS
CONCEPT OF INVESTIGATION WITH INDONESIA REPRESENTATIVE.
I STRESSED THAT JUSTICE DESIRED WORK WITH CORRESPONDING
AUTHORITY IN INDONESIA AND THAT INDONESIA EMBASSY IN

WASHINGTON MIGHT NOT, THEREFORE, BE IN POSITION GET FULL STORY.

5. SALIM WANTED TO KNOW WHETHER CONTACT WITH JUSTICE SHOULD BE NOW OR WHEN INVESTIGATION COMPLETED. I SAID I FELT EARLY CONTACT PROBABLY DESIRABLE. I COULDD NOT SAY HOW LONG INVESTIGATION MIGHT TAKE BUT HAD IMPRESSION THAT JUSTICE WOULD BEGIN SOON, AT LEAST ON PRELIMINARY BASIS.

6. SALIM THEN SAID HE WAS PLANNING TO MAKE LOCAL PUBLIC RELEASE OF SYNOPSIS OF LETTERS RECEIVED FROM HUGHES, GT&E, AND U.S. GOVERNMENT (EXIM/PROXMIRE EXCHANGE). HE WAS INCLINED TO ANNOUNCE THAT INDONESIAN EFFORTS TO DATE HAD DISCLOSED NOT BASIS FOR SUSPECTING WRONG DOING ON PART OF ANY INDONESIAN OFFICIAL. EVEN THOUGH U.S. JUSTICE INVESTIGATION MIGHT BE PROCEEDING, SALIM, FOR POLITICAL REASONS, FEELS IT NECESSARY TO MAKE SOME DEFINITIVE STATEMENT. (MARCH 4 MORNING PAPER CARRIED BRIEF PUBLIC STATEMENT BY SALIM THAT, BASED ON INPUT FROM ALL CONCERNED PARTIES, THERE WAS NO TRUTH IN THE BRIBERY ALLEGATION AND THAT THE CASE IS CLOSED.)

7. QUITE APART FROM INVESTIGATION, SALIM STRESSED THAT HE HAD TO DO SOMETHING TO MEET DEMAND OF PARLIAMENTARIANS AND OTHERS FOR SOME KIND OF APOLOGY TO INDEONESIA. INDONESIANS HAD BEEN SEEKING TO FIND THOMAS CHEATHAM. HE WAS RECENTLY IN SINGAPORE BUT LEFT FOR TOKYO WITHOUT COMING TO INDONESIA. IN RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS, I TOLD SALIM I COULD NOT SAY WHETHER JUSTICE WOULD SEEK TO QUESTION CHEATHAM AND SUG-
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GESTED THAT ANY INDONESIAN ACTION AGAINST CHEATHAM HAD BEST BE DISCUSSED WITH THEIR AMERICAN LAWYERS.

8. SALIM MENTIONED CONTACTS INDONESIAN PRESS ATTACHE HAD HAD WITH NEW YORK TIMES. ACCORDING TO PRESS ATTACHEN HERSH HAD SAID HE HAD NO REAL BASIS FOR CHARGES AGAINST INDONESIANS. RUSMIN HAS WRITTEN LETTER TO TIMES ASKING THAT THEY PUT THIS IN WRITING. I TOLD SALIM WE COULD BE OF LITTLE HELP IN RELATIONS WITH NEW YORK TIMES BUT SUGGESTED THAT AMBASSADOR PURSUE SUBJECT WITH SENIOR OFFICIALS OF NEWSPAPER. IT WAS POSSIBLE THAT NEWSPAPER MIGHT BE PREPARED TO ACKNOWLEDGE IN WRITING, AT LEAST THAT THEY HAD NO INTENTION EMBARRASSING INDONESIA.

9. FINALLY, SALIM ASKED WHETHER I THOUGHT THERE WAS NAY BASIS FOR BELIEVING THAT NEW YORK TIMES STORY WAS PART OF PRESS CONSPIRACY AGAINST INDONESIA, POSSIBLY FED BY INDONESIAN OPPONENTS OF PRESIDENT SUHARTO. I SAID I TOTALLY DISCOUNTED CONSPIRATORIAL THEORY. ARTICLE HAD TO BE SEEN IN

CONTEXT OF AMERICAN DOMESTIC CONCERN OVER CORPORATE
ACTIVITIES. INDONESIAN INVOLVEMENT WAS ONLY INCIDENTAL.

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